

Compact Cities

**The rise and death of
the sustainable city?**

A view from Cairo

Compact Cities

The rise and death of the sustainable city?

A view from Cairo, Egypt



Ir. Claudio Acioly Jr.
Rotterdam, The Netherlands

availability
of land

legal
framework

land policy
land market

social context
demographic
features

economy

Social, Political, Institutional
and Legislative Aspects

Density of Cities

housing
density
dwellings /ha

building density
sq m/ha

Population
density
inhab./ha
inhab/km²

Technical Aspects

design

standards

settlement layout
balance public/
private domain

housing
typology
shape

size and
shape of
dwellings

Planning
regulations

Size, shape
& dimensions
of plots

Roads and
infrastructure

Public
facilities

GLOBALIZATION

Competition

**Restructuring of
Urban Economies**

CHANGES

Size

Function

Physical Form

CITIES

FEATURES:

- **de-industrialization**
- **decline of manufacturing output**
- **enterprise restructuring**
- **urban violence & crime**
- **unemployment**
- **deterioration of built environment**
- **environmental degradation**
- **flourishing service sector**
- **social stress**
- **restructuring land and labor markets**
- **fluctuation of local tax base & revenues**
- **fragmentation of production**

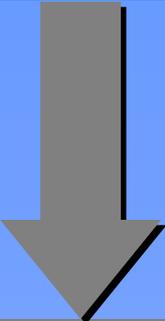
LARGE CITIES

Increases water usage per capita

Loss of agricultural lands

Negative environmental changes

THE SIZE



SMALL CITIES

Increase costs of urbanization

Inefficiencies in scale

INADEQUATE PLANNING & MANAGEMENT TOOLS

To control?

To guide?

To Contain?

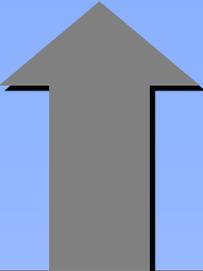
HIGH DENSITY

Compact cities

Upward growth

In-filling growth

THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION & PHYSICAL FORM



LOW DENSITY

urban sprawl

satellite cities / new towns

peripheral growth areas

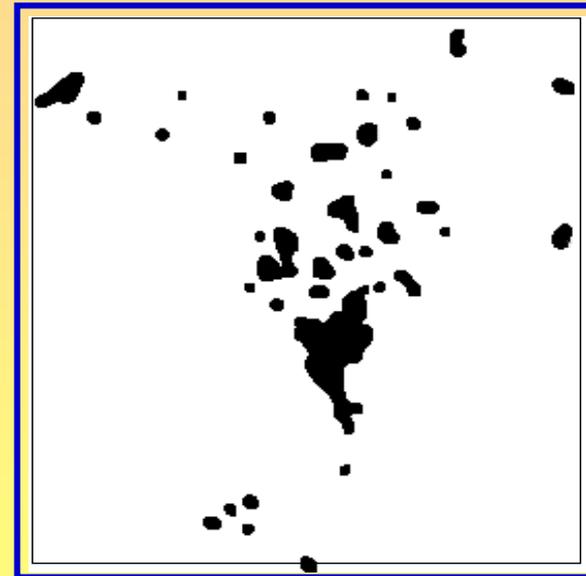
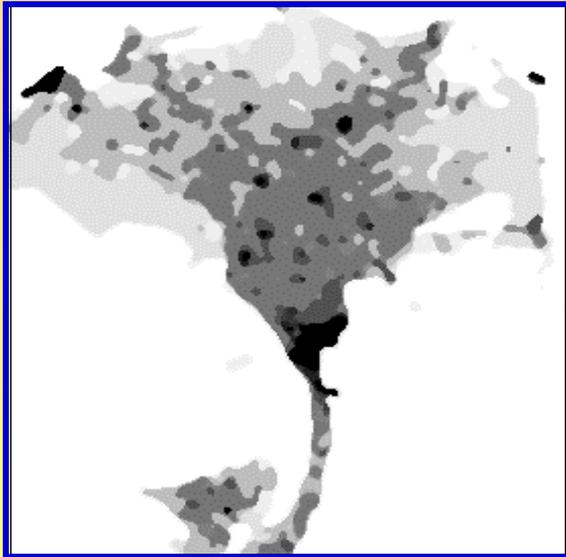
CIAM typologies







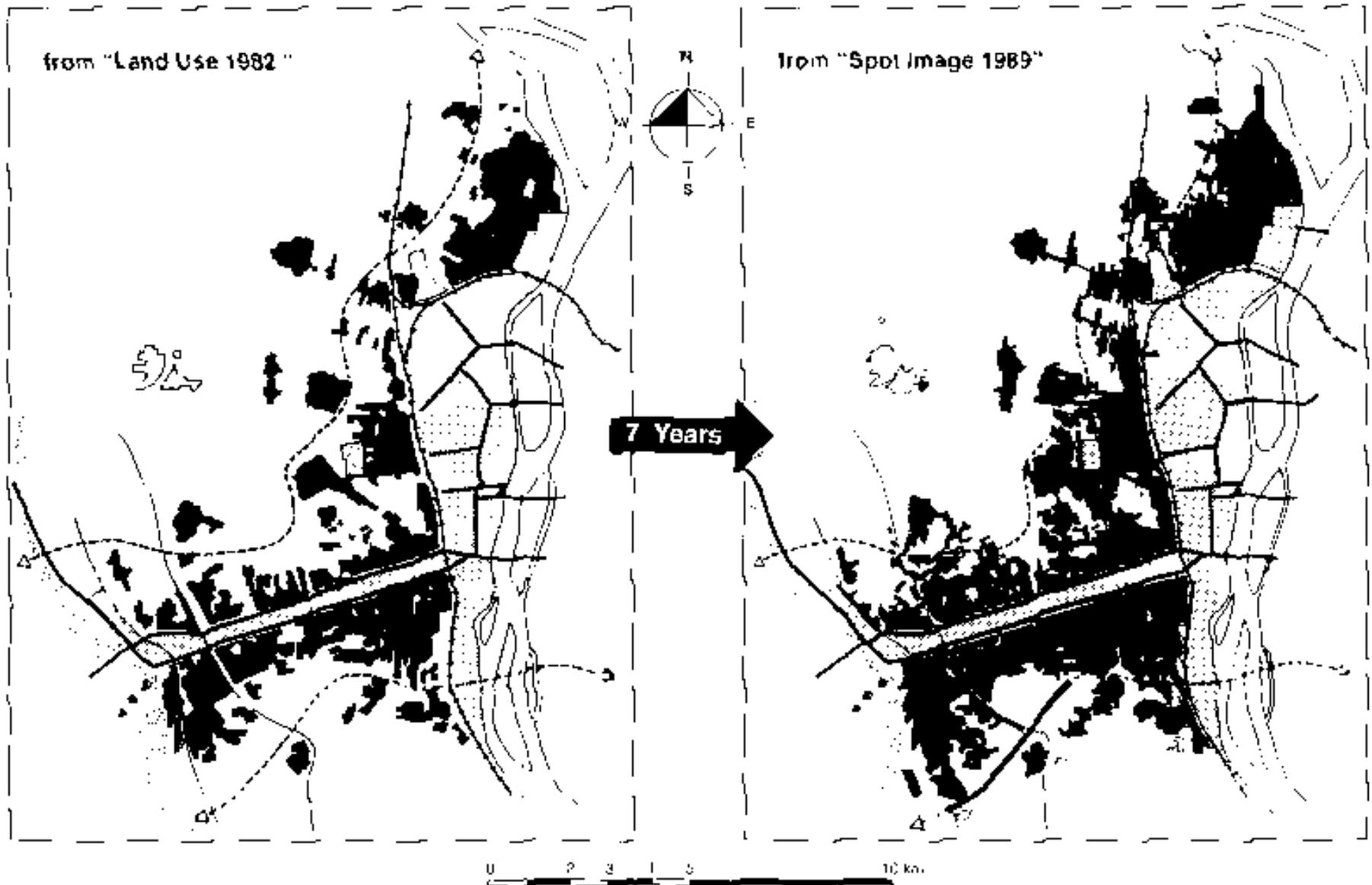
Two conflicting trends in Egypt's economic development: Urbanisation versus Agriculture



A continuous process of informal and illegal encroachments on fertile/arable land destined for agriculture

Informal urban growth

5/2















**The magnitude of informal
processes reveals:
the inefficacy of housing
policies,
obsolete legislation,
and inefficient governance**

















The space for social reproduction and the quality of life deteriorates but the need for work, housing, income increases dramatically and continuously







There is a need for efficient urban management instruments as well as civil society participation to steer the process and legitimise sustainable development actions from the part of the Government.

But how to put that into practice?







Some of the challenges

Managing the city and its rural and natural surroundings.

Balancing urban-rural under pressure of market forces while maintaining quality of life.

Sustainable cities or cities to support sustainable development?

HOW?







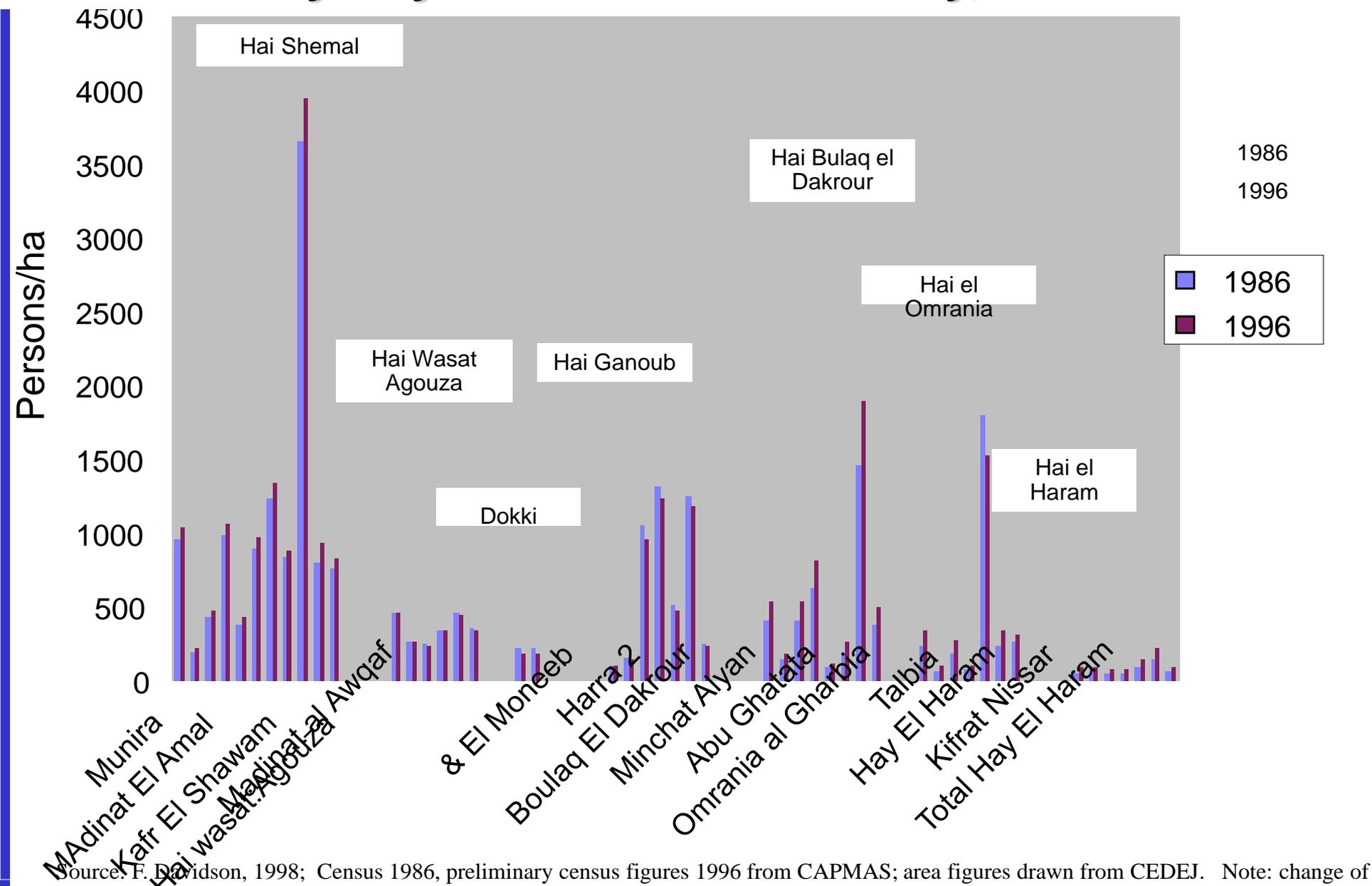








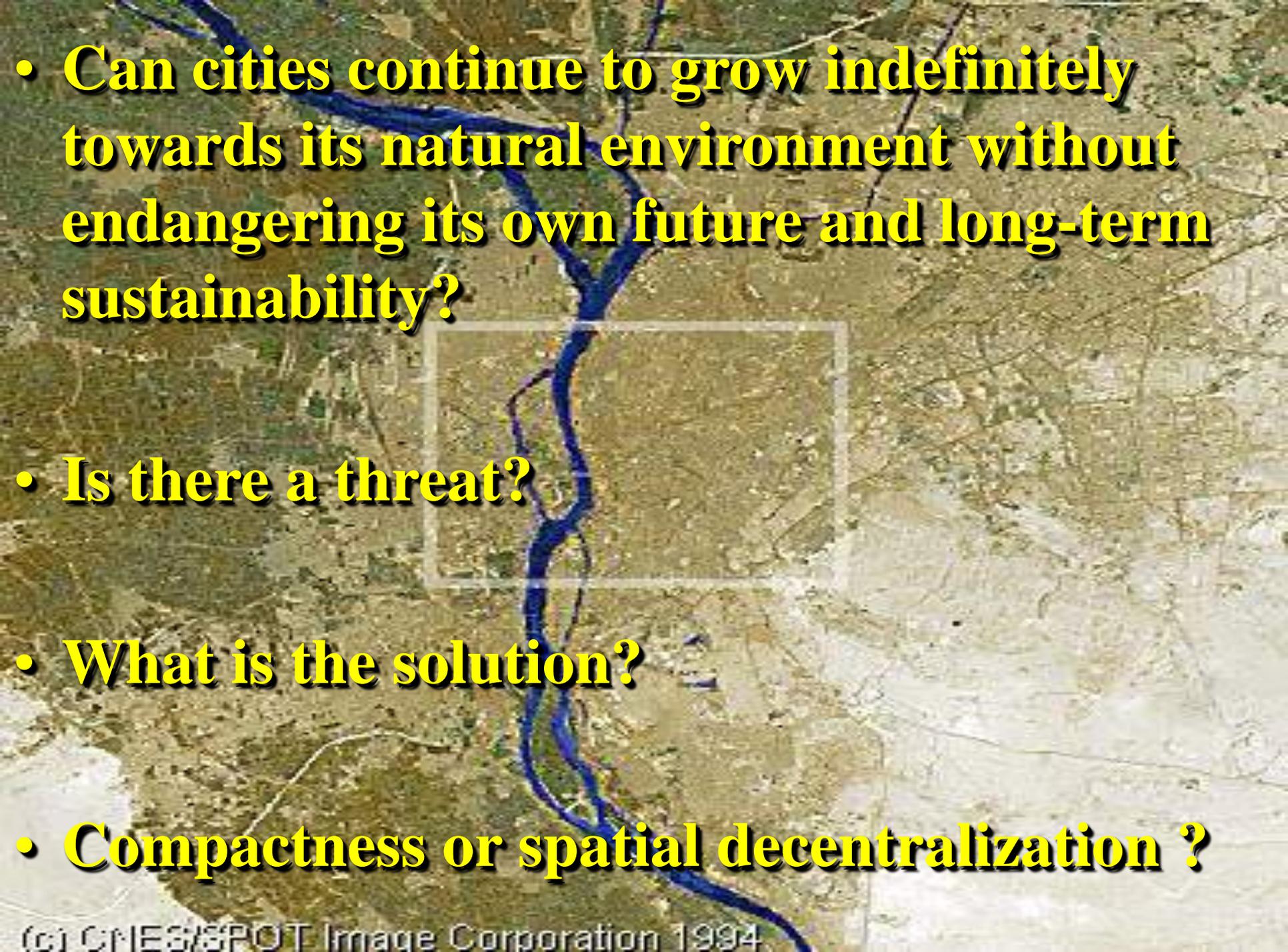
Densities by Shyakhah/ Hai in Giza City, 1986 and 1996



Source: F. Davidson, 1998; Census 1986, preliminary census figures 1996 from CAPMAS; area figures drawn from CEDEJ. Note: change of means that some figures must be treated with caution. In general, densities are increasing, but there are notable exceptions, such as Dokki and A

Searching for Efficiency:

- **maximising infrastructure**
- **optimal use of land**
- **equity in public resources allocation**
- **getting the right economy of scale**

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- An aerial photograph of a river system, likely the Amazon, showing a main river channel and several tributaries. A rectangular area is highlighted in the center of the image, showing a dense network of smaller channels and possibly a floodplain or wetland area. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.
- **Can cities continue to grow indefinitely towards its natural environment without endangering its own future and long-term sustainability?**
 - **Is there a threat?**
 - **What is the solution?**
 - **Compactness or spatial decentralization ?**

Urban policies and firm public intervention is essential but we need to understand the logic of urban growth in its various dimensions before implementing them.

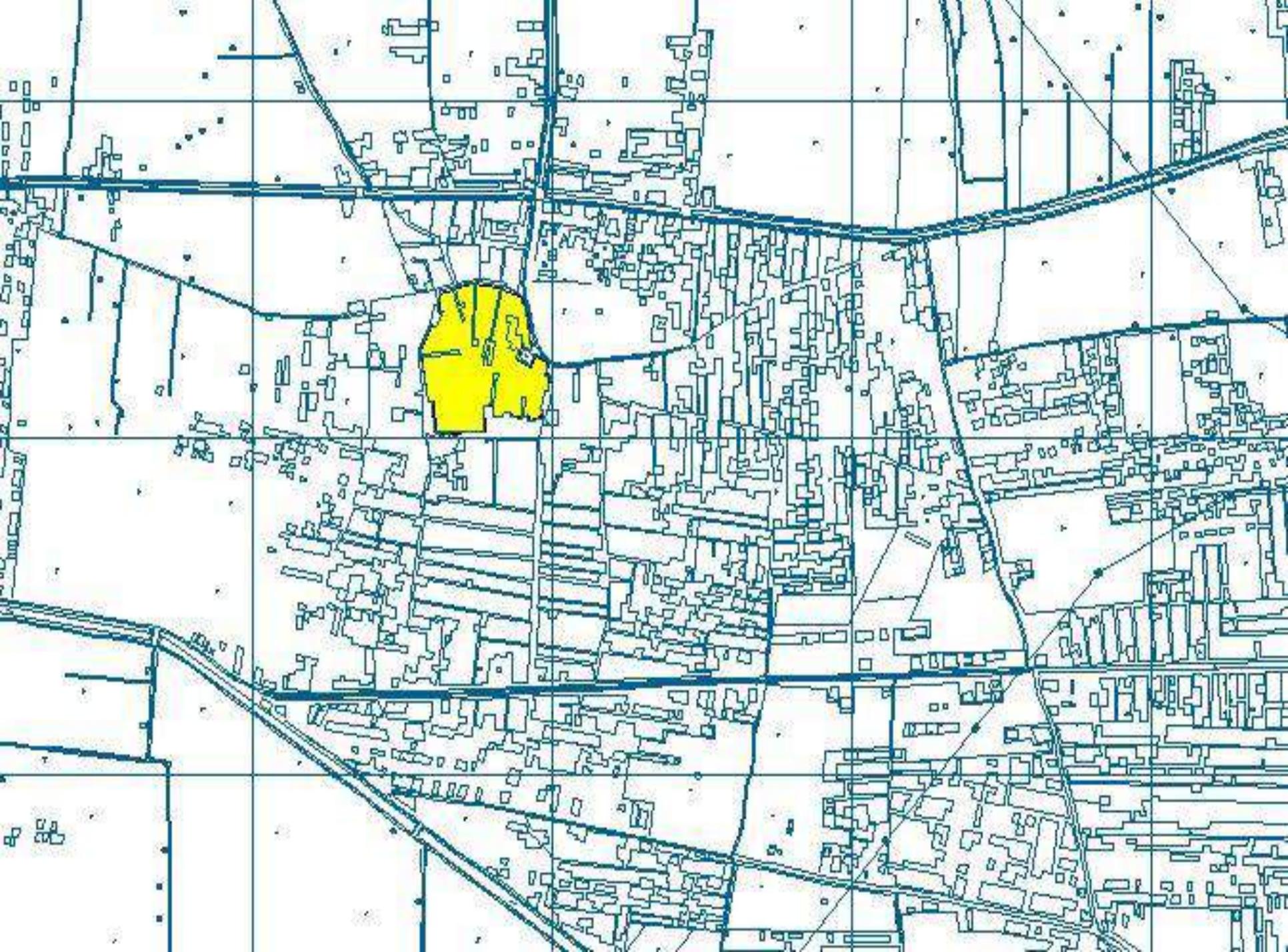


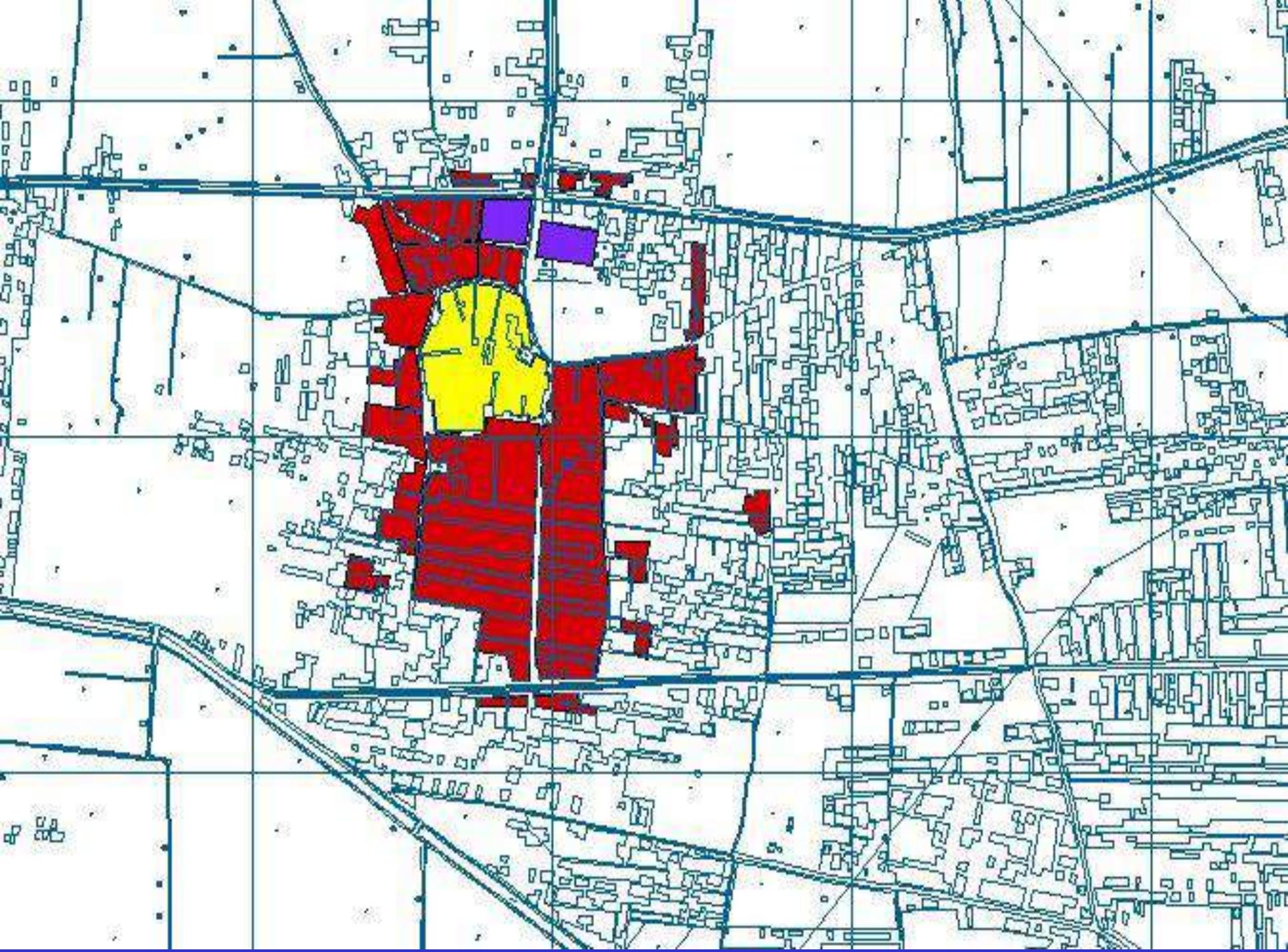


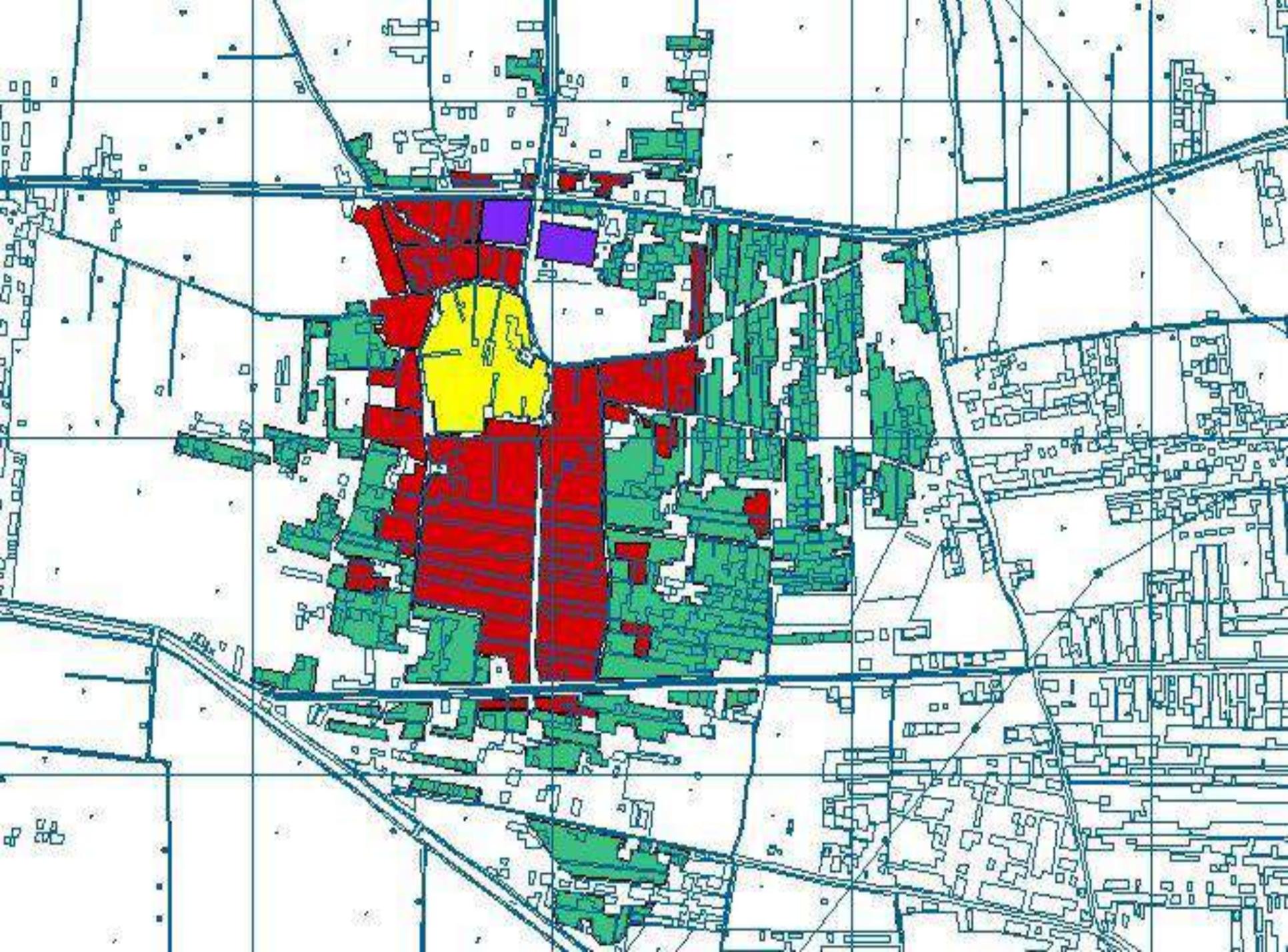


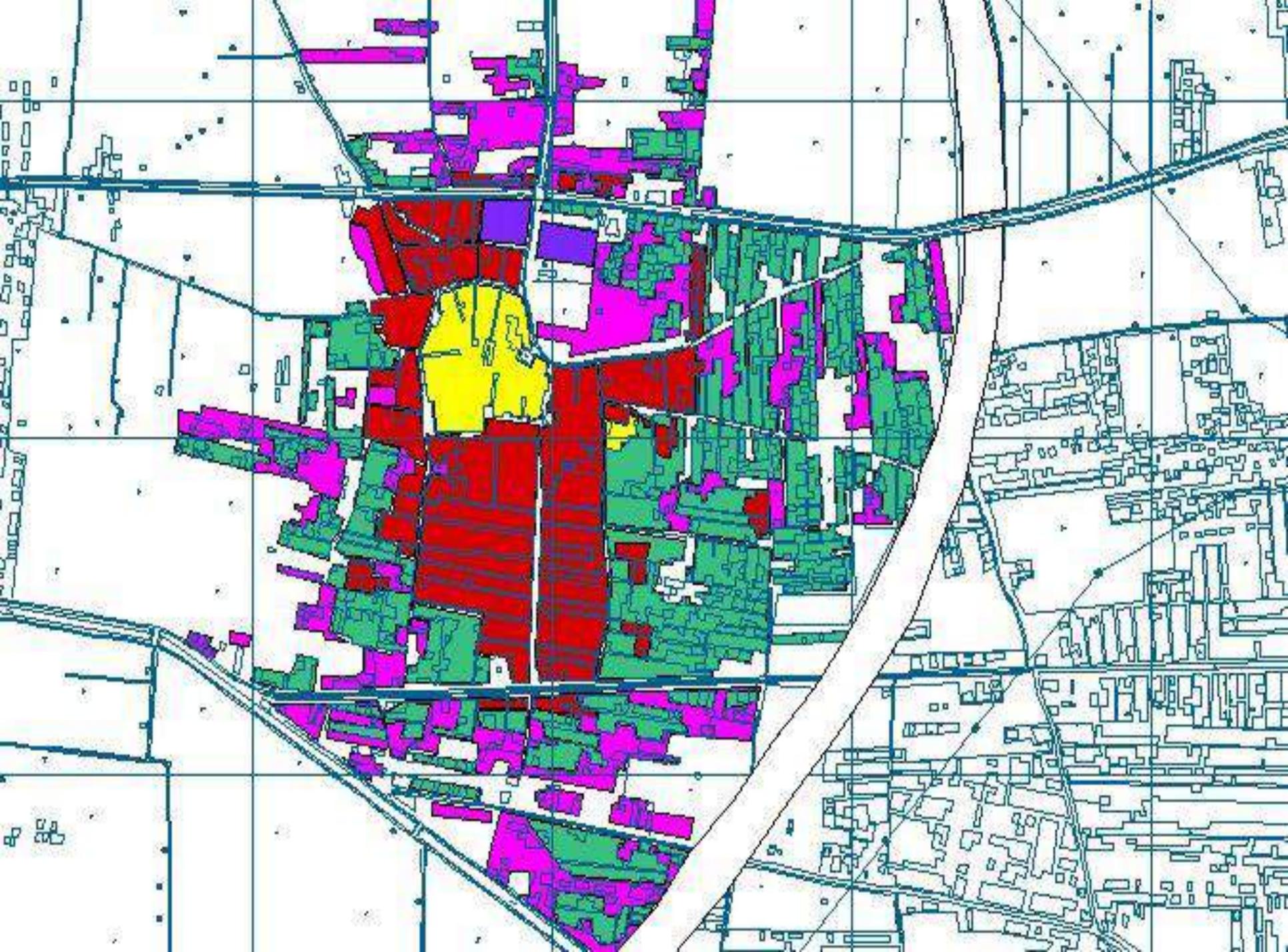




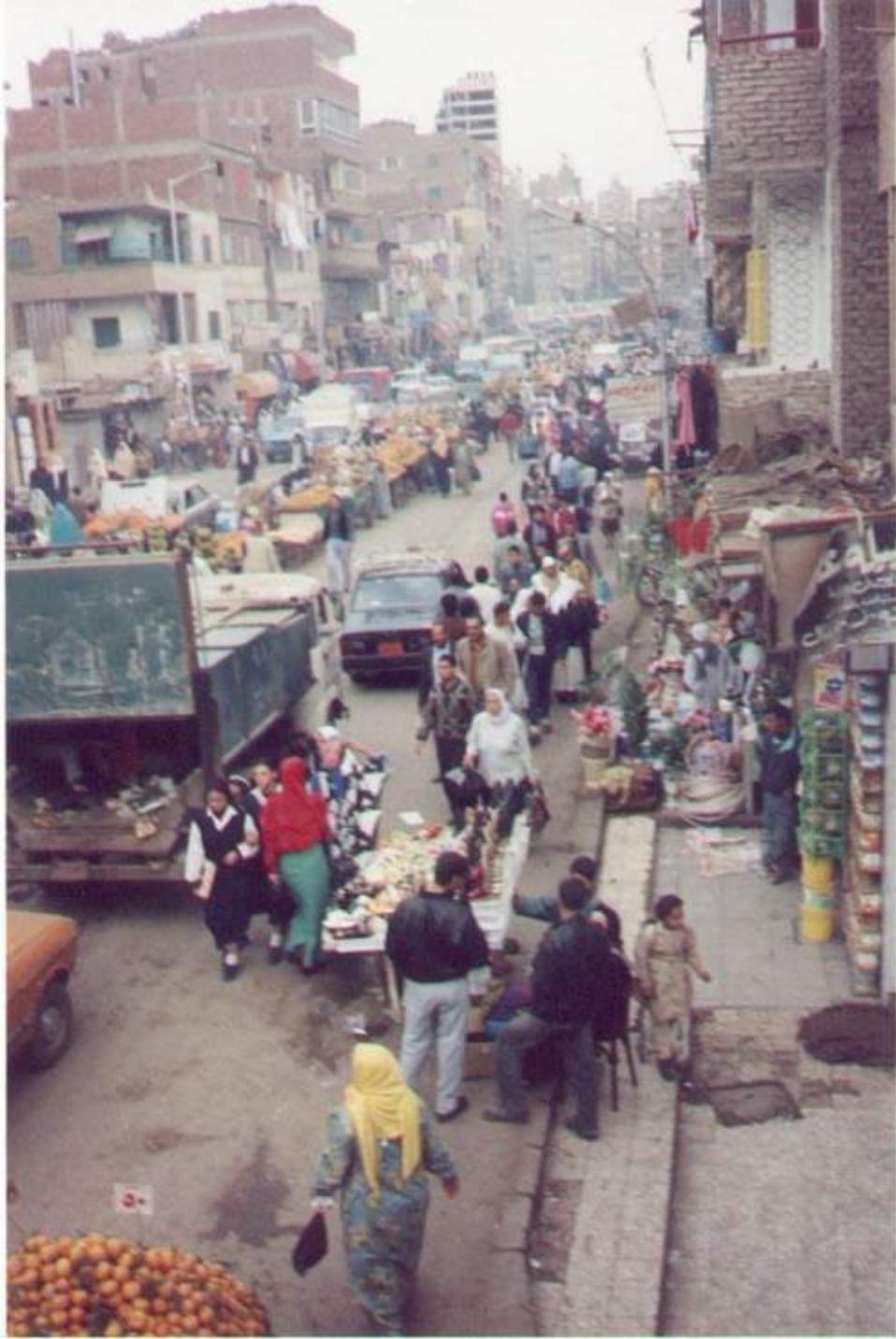








**The environmental impacts of
this process can be
irreversible and/or have a high
social-economic cost.**









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تكتب
محمد حسين محمد
الراجحي
الرياض
صندوق بريد 11111





**How to we face the challenges in
this context of rapid
transformation and informality
coupled with inadequate
policies?**